

EDITORIAL

Another Annual Session

ANOTHER ANNUAL SESSION of the California Medical Association, the ninety-third in the 108-year history of the organization, was completed with great success late in March.

The expressions of enthusiasm by many who attended were particularly gratifying to those who arranged the scientific portion of the meeting, which this year for the first time came under the direction of the new Scientific Board.

Acting well in advance, the Committee on Scientific Assemblies of the Scientific Board chose the topic of immunology and developed its program for the major part of the session around this theme. Toward this end, it and the officers of the Scientific Sections created a panel of more than a hundred essayists, together with live, closed-circuit color television presentations and medical motion pictures arranged in symposia.

That the scientific meetings, both general and specialist-oriented, were for the most part well accepted was proved each day by full and overflow audiences in many of the meeting rooms that were deemed adequate to measure up to attendance records of past years. The man in the audience could listen to immunology in the language of his own sphere of practice, and he did so in numbers which dictate rearrangement of schedules for meeting rooms in the future.

A carefully selected list of guest speakers, all oriented to the meeting's theme, provided leadership and inspiration for the nearly 3,000 physicians registered and contributed greatly to the overall high level of scientific achievement.

Tied in with the same theme were color television presentations. This medium, which is not always available or capable of being housed, again demonstrated its popularity with overflow audiences of enthusiastic viewers. Medical cases competed with surgical in the TV programs. Audience response in

both fields was comparable and physician interest ran high.

Medical motion pictures again attracted large crowds and were, as in the past few years, immeasurably enlivened by the participation of commentators and panel discussants. Here again the presence and the comments of live experts added to the visual presentation and from time to time gave the viewers a more accurate or complete picture than could be captured on film alone. The combination of film and personalities brought the presentation right into the room with a memorable force.

Completing the scientific picture were the technical exhibits, once labeled commercial and more recently called industrial. More than a hundred participating firms filled a large exhibit area with their newest and brightest products and services. Even aircraft were offered for those physicians who fly for professional or personal reasons.

On the legislative side, the House of Delegates ran with all smoothness and efficiency. The decrease in numbers of delegates seemed not to detract at all from the deliberations of the body but did tend to streamline the operations of this policy-making group.

Under the plan of component society representation in the House of Delegates adopted two years ago, this year's group included 252 elected delegates from the component societies, a decrease of 38.5 per cent from the 410 society delegates a year earlier. Added to these 252 were 68 ex-officio delegates, including the officers and members of the Council, the past presidents of the CMA and the 18 members named by the Scientific Board. This membership of 320 proved entirely adequate to carry on the business of the House and more flexible than the larger membership of earlier years.

The size of the Council also became a matter for consideration when the Council announced its appointment of a committee to consider its format.

This committee has projected the probable size of the Council in the next 15 years and has tentatively suggested that the elected district councilors represent a larger membership segment than at present. In addition, a proposed amendment to the constitution would redistrict the state and provide district councilors as representatives of a much larger membership segment than is the case today. No action can be taken on this proposal until the 1965 meeting.

In the annual elections, Doctor Ralph C. Teall of Sacramento, a former councilor from the Tenth District, was chosen as President-Elect (see Page

296). Several changes were noted in the election of district councilors due to retirements and expiration of terms of office. The same held true with the delegates and alternates to the AMA from California.

Taken as a whole, the 1964 annual session must be described as smooth, well planned and organized and of high caliber. The Scientific Board in its initial effort demonstrated its worth as a center for our scientific activities in a group of experts. From this start, we are confident that future annual sessions will live up to the promise generated this year.

